

stop and that it is not in our interest to stop. Today, we live with a permanent contradiction between our proclaimed values and intentions (all on the side of true diversity) on the one hand, and our acts (which thwart diversity), our belief that the American experience is of universal relevance, our habits of control on the other. The system I suggest would end the contradiction. And if the cost is to be a modification of our style and political system, let us at least realize that vigilant self-restraint, or restrained involvement, is worth the pride and certainly not beyond our "psychological resources." *

* Although this book does not deal specifically with American policy in Southeast Asia, it may be useful to suggest briefly how the notions developed in this chapter apply to Vietnam. I have expressed my opinion in a letter published by *The New York Times* on May 1, 1966; a year and a half later, I see no reason to revise my arguments, and I therefore quote from this letter here:

"I am struck by the similarities between the Algerian War and our plight in South Vietnam. In both cases a Western power tried to put down a considerable native rebellion by primarily military means. But the heart of the problem was the absence of any solid native political force capable of legitimizing the fight against the rebels and of preventing this fight from looking like the outside power's attempt to preserve its own interests.

"In both cases a massive military build-up by the Western power served only to worsen its political failure by increasing destruction, pulverizing the social and economic structures and aggravating the "foreign" character of the war.

"In both cases belated attempts at social reform foundered on the absence of a legitimate native political force capable of carrying it out and on the contradiction between a huge war effort and externally induced social transformations.

"In both cases the Western country's effort was doomed by the refusal of most local political leaders hostile to the rebels to put their authority at the service of the Western power.

"Differences are more apparent than real. France, a colonial power, was the target of the rebellion from the start. But United States support for Saigon's rulers is finally making it the target of all South Vietnamese nationalists—Communist or not.

"The Algerian National Liberation Front was not Communist. But the Communism of the Vietcong does not make the American predicament different from the French. The means used so far are not any less appropriate to the objectives, nor are America's objectives—to prevent the violent overthrow of South Vietnam's regime and to thwart Red China's theory of national liberation wars—any more realistic.

"For as long as South Vietnam's rulers concern themselves mainly with waging war, they will be too unrepresentative and too arbitrary to be politically effective; and as long as it has no effective government, South Vietnam will be a fiction surviving only by the grace of America's own force. Since—in Gen. Maxwell Taylor's revealing phrase—it is "difficult to plant the corn outside the stockade when the Indians are still around," the only prospect would be a

Sisyphean pursuit of highly resilient Indians, with American foreign policy and military deployments as the stone.

"Wars of national liberation could still favor them, and America's concentration on Vietnam would detract attention from the conditions elsewhere.

"We have failed to find a political solution instantly civil, is susceptible of no other than internal resolution of the civil war, and a definite of the domestic settlement. It is in America's South Vietnamese forces which have refused their successors to come to the fore at last, so as to the war without any overt American involvement.

"For our part, we must shift from the unresolvable Vietnamese affairs to the determination of a South Vietnam in which the Vietcong or even a reunified Vietnam under Communist peace in Southeast Asia; i.e., neutralization under U.N. or Geneva Conference controls.

"Our adversaries have no incentive to stated objectives and hedge about admitting free elections in all of South Vietnam possible and fair, presuppose a cease-fire, grant unless it is preceded or accompanied status quo."

To sum up: our military effort has succeeded in taking over South Vietnam by force, and its North Vietnamese supporters and prohibitive for American foreign policy. A national system, and for the South Vietnamese a suspension of the bombing of North Vietnam solution possible. The success, indeed the depend on our willingness to accept an international whose primary objective would be the national supervision. After a cease-fire and South would remain administered by the South the cease-fire. Political parties representing compete in all areas. Negotiations would South Vietnamese (the Vietcong and presentiate the establishment and the role of the loser of the elections would not be the United States and North Vietnam would withdrawal of their forces from South Vietnam would negotiate the international status of the two Vietnams would be left Vietnamese regime, but the international intangible.

Such terms meet the various requirements, however, meet important obstacles in American

Sisyphean pursuit of highly resilient Indians, with the whole balance of American foreign policy and military deployments as the main casualties.

"Wars of national liberation could still break out wherever local conditions favor them, and America's concentration on a most elusive military victory in Vietnam would detract attention from the necessary improvement of local conditions elsewhere.

"We have failed to find a political solution to a war which, being predominantly civil, is susceptible of no other solution. What is needed is both the internal resolution of the civil war, and a definition of the external consequences of the domestic settlement. It is in America's most vital interest to allow those South Vietnamese forces which have refused to side with Diem and his military successors to come to the fore at last, so as to try to find a domestic solution to the war without any overt American involvement.

"For our part, we must shift from the unsuccessful manipulation of domestic Vietnamese affairs to the determination of the external conditions, thanks to which a South Vietnam in which the Vietcong would play an important role, or even a reunified Vietnam under Communist rule, would not be a threat to peace in Southeast Asia; i.e., neutralization with various international guarantees under U.N. or Geneva Conference controls.

"Our adversaries have no incentive to negotiate as long as we stick to our stated objectives and hedge about admitting the Vietcong to political power before free elections in all of South Vietnam. For such elections, to be both possible and fair, presuppose a cease-fire, which the Vietcong is unlikely to grant unless it is preceded or accompanied by drastic change in the domestic status quo."

To sum up: our military effort has succeeded in preventing the Vietcong from taking over South Vietnam by force. But it could eliminate the Vietcong and its North Vietnamese supporters and guides only at a cost that would be prohibitive for American foreign policy, for the goal of a moderate international system, and for the South Vietnamese people. What is required now is a suspension of the bombing of North Vietnam, in order to make a negotiated solution possible. The success, indeed the possibility of meaningful negotiations depend on our willingness to accept an interim coalition government in Saigon, whose primary objective would be the holding of free elections under international supervision. After a cease-fire and until those elections, each area in the South would remain administered by the side that was in control on the day of the cease-fire. Political parties representing all opinions would be allowed to compete in all areas. Negotiations would take place at different levels. The South Vietnamese (the Vietcong and present Saigon authorities) would negotiate the establishment and the role of the interim regime (and agree that the loser of the elections would not be the victim of political genocide). The United States and North Vietnam would negotiate an agreement on the gradual withdrawal of their forces from South Vietnam. An international conference would negotiate the international status of South Vietnam. The eventual unification of the two Vietnams would be left to the decision of the future South Vietnamese regime, but the international status of South Vietnam would be intangible.

Such terms meet the various requirements set up in this chapter. They do, however, meet important obstacles in America's political style and institutions.

HAK: "Two-tier"

NW: On the...

This is precisely where the remarks of this chapter's last section apply: it is the task of America's political leaders to explain that our capacity to shape the world according to our dreams is limited, and to show that a settlement along these lines, while far worse than the victory that we have unrealistically sought, is nevertheless preferable to any other remaining possibility, such as unilateral withdrawal, drastic escalation, or perpetual war. The storms leadership may encounter are a challenge, they cannot be the pretext of an abdication of leadership.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Atlantic Puzzle

When speaking of the North Atlantic an area in which deterrence and de-
 cessful; in which the positive poli-
 barrier of NATO (which give to in
 America's other alliances has attain-
 able success yet demonstrated the
 this chapter, I should like to analy-
 tral difficulties of American policy
 the United States must operate in
 mean not only NATO but also in-
 oped in the area, such as OECD
 ganizations). In the next chapter
 prospects.

Over the years there has devel-
 Atlantic orthodoxy which stress-
 of values, political institutions, and
 of the Alliance, and, on the other
 prerequisite for the accomplish-
 facing Alliance members.¹ Such
 description of interstate relation-
 poses that what has still to be
 operation, is already solved, and
 strated, the need for solidarity,
 a kind of leap of faith to believ-
 range of mutual transactions, in
 society, are the determinants of

¹ See, for instance, the statements of
 the Senate Subcommittee on Nations
 April 27 and May 25, 1966, in Henry
 Jackson Subcommittee Hearings
 Praeger, 1967).